

## The Messenger

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# Hernia

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## Hernia // Rachel Bevels

On New Year's Eve,  
you had chest pains  
You had stopped laughing  
at my jokes an hour before  
so I knew you were sick  
or sad. Your face was paper  
as we circled around your  
limp limbs on the couch  
You grabbed your heart  
Mom grabbed her keys  
and She grabbed your hand  
I reached for something  
to grab onto. Between  
teenager and adult, I was  
ignored at the party and  
gladly went with you. Sat  
in the waiting room with her  
trying not to laugh at her  
pointing out the nurse's hair  
standing a foot off her head in  
the jaws of an oversized clip  
Each waiting on you and  
wondering which of us you  
were waiting on, but playing  
friends. Mom came and  
I went down narrow halls  
constricting like veins  
contracting like  
my gagging  
stomach at

the smell  
You said little, so we  
watched the Big Bang Theory  
And I tried not to look at  
the needle in your arm, that  
tear in the fold of your skin  
much smaller than the  
opening in your throat  
that didn't know  
what to let in and  
what to keep out and  
when to stay put and I  
couldn't stay put because  
She had to come and I  
had to go back up the halls  
where I didn't belong,  
pushed out the hernia of your  
heart and into the sights  
of the nurse whose waving  
hair wall was less funny  
alone, until the silence  
got so loud I couldn't  
take it and rode back to  
watch the ball drop with a  
room full of strangers